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High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Preparations for the substantive preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/55/L.82

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

Summary

By its draft resolution A/55/L.82, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to continue to provide the preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development with all needed support, including a secretariat commensurate with the level of the event and adequate staff and other resources, and including the launching of a global public awareness campaign with as much support as possible from public/private partnerships in order to ensure, in collaboration with the authorities of the host country, the successful realization of the Conference and public awareness of its outcome.

The General Assembly, by its resolution 54/196, decided to convene in 2001 a high-level intergovernmental event at the ministerial level on financing for development. Subsequently, in its resolution 55/245, the Assembly decided that the event would take the form of an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, at the highest political level, including at the summit level, and accepted the offer of Mexico to host the International Conference on Financing for Development. The Secretary-General informed the Assembly that he had established a coordinating secretariat for the event in March 2000, with the core staff drawn from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and supplemented by staff seconded from the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (A/55/315, para. 17). For

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the most part the operating costs of the secretariat are met from existing regular budget resources approved for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with the balance drawn from the trust fund established to support the Conference and its Preparatory Committee. UNCTAD has contributed to and supported the preparatory process by holding seminars and undertaking technical work. In regard to regional arrangements, the five regional commissions, in cooperation with other United Nations bodies, regional development banks and financial institutions, have held a number of high-level regional intergovernmental meetings and are expected to hold consultative meetings in their respective regions from within existing resources in the biennium 2000-2001. In response to the provisions of the draft resolution, the regional commissions would jointly hold an interregional meeting of eminent experts in January 2002, and UNCTAD would organize a seminar, also in January 2002, on market access.

The activities to be carried out in 2001 and 2002 and their related costs may be summarized as follows:

(a) For 2001, the secretariat will continue to implement activities to the extent possible within the approved level of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Any additional resources warranted would be reported in the context of the second programme budget performance report for the biennium 2000-2001;

(b) For 2002, the requirements for the activities described below are estimated at $295,100.

Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, additional resources estimated at $295,100 would need to be appropriated for the biennium 2002-2003 by the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, to be charged to the contingency fund.

I. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of draft resolution A/55/L.82, the General Assembly would, among other things:

(a) Stress the importance of effective preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development and welcome the preparatory activities carried out so far, including the substantive interactive dialogue and contribution of all stakeholders held during the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference;

(b) Request the Secretary-General to continue to provide the preparatory process and the Conference with all needed support, including a secretariat commensurate with the level of the event and adequate staff and other resources, and including the launching of a global public awareness campaign with as much support as possible from public/private partnerships in order to ensure, in collaboration with the authorities of the host country, the successful realization of the Conference and public awareness of its outcome;

(c) Request the coordinating secretariat to provide the Preparatory Committee on a regular basis with all relevant information on the progress of the global public awareness campaign;

(d) Invite all relevant stakeholders to continue their active involvement in support of the financing for development preparatory process, including through staff support from the major institutional stakeholders to the financing for development coordinating secretariat, and invite the coordinating secretariat to continue to provide support to the Facilitator, including in the preparation of the concise first draft of the outcome document mandated by Assembly resolution 55/245, of 21 March 2001, taking into account the substantive interactive dialogue and all other relevant inputs received by the Preparatory Committee within the framework of its substantive agenda;

(e) Request that the first draft of the outcome document be presented to the Preparatory Committee in mid-September 2001 for its consideration at its resumed third session, to be held from 15 to 19 October 2001;

(f) Encourage Governments as well as all relevant stakeholders, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the regional development banks and all other relevant regional bodies, to continue considering concrete initiatives in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development, within the framework of its substantive agenda, including through the organization of expert panels and round tables, and request the coordinating secretariat to bring information on such work to the attention of the Preparatory Committee at its resumed third session;

(g) Reaffirm the importance of continuing to strengthen ways and means to deepen the efforts of all relevant stakeholders, including at the regional level as well as by the civil society and the business sector, in support of the preparatory process and the Conference, within the framework of its substantive agenda.

II. Additional requirements at full cost

A. Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

2. As reported by the Secretary-General (A/55/315), a coordinating secretariat of the International Conference on Financing for Development was established in March 2000, with the core staff drawn from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and supplemented by staff seconded on a non-reimbursable basis from UNDP, the World Bank and UNCTAD. During the biennium 2000-2001, UNCTAD will continue to support the preparatory process for the Conference, and it anticipates holding a seminar on investment issues and another on interrelationships among trade, investment and finance. The seminars will be organized within existing resources. It is expected that for the remainder of 2001, the five regional commissions will hold consultative meetings in their respective regions, the costs of which will be borne by their respective programme budgets for the biennium 2000-2001. Public information activities initiated in the current biennium have included the preparation of public information products, such as press kits, background articles, fact sheets and brochures; the development of other materials and the promotion of the Conference; the development of partnerships with relevant civil society actors; and proactive media outreach activities to interest journalists in the issues related to the Conference and to encourage the international news media to cover the Conference.

3. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, it is the intention of the Secretary-General to continue implementation of the activities in 2001 to the maximum extent possible, within the resources available under the approved provisions of the regular programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. It is the intention of the Secretary-General to report on how requirements have been met in the context of the second programme budget performance report for the biennium 2000-2001.

4. Conference-servicing costs for holding the organizational and resumed organizational sessions and the sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the high-level international intergovernmental event on financing for development have been estimated, at full cost, at $1,087,700. That estimate is based on the theoretical assumption that no part of the conference-servicing requirements will be met from within the permanent conference-servicing capacity included under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Provision has been included under that section not only for meetings programmed at the time of preparation of the budget, but also for meetings that might be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. Consequently, no additional resources are being sought in this connection for the biennium 2000-2001, and total realized requirements for conference servicing will be reported in the context of the second performance report for the biennium 2000-2001.

B. Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

5. The decisions concerning the extension of the preparatory process and the holding in March 2002 of the conference were adopted by the General Assembly only in March 2001. As a result, the activities to be implemented in 2002 and the related resources have not been provided for in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The additional requirements for implementing these activities in 2002 are summarized below.

Section 9, Economic and social affairs ($100,000)

6. It is expected that the arrangements for the core staff described above will continue through June 2002 for the finalization of all reports and other wrap-up activities relating to the Conference. An estimated amount of $80,000 would be required to provide for general temporary assistance to cover the cost of five work-months each of one P-4 and one General Service (Other level) post to assist the coordinating secretariat in the effective preparation and servicing of the Conference. The responsibilities of the staff member at the P-4 level would include the provision of general support to the Preparatory Committee, its Bureau and its co-chairmen, interaction with delegations and national authorities of Member States, interaction with the authorities of the host country, interaction with major institutional and non-institutional stakeholders, the provision of support to the Facilitator in the preparation of the draft outcome documents, monitoring of the creation of expert panels and round tables, and advising, assisting and monitoring the programme of work developed with the business sector. The General Service (Other level) staff member would assist with clerical functions. In addition, an amount of $20,000 would be required to cover the cost of three trips to Washington, D.C., for consultations with the Bretton Woods institutions, one trip to Geneva for discussions with WTO and one trip for attendance at the interregional meeting to be held in Mexico in January 2002 (see below). The total amount required under section 9 in the biennium 2002-2003 is therefore estimated at $100,000.

Section 11A, Trade and development ($37,700)

7. In 2002, UNCTAD will continue to actively and fully support the preparatory process and the Conference itself. UNCTAD plans to organize in New York a two-day seminar early in January 2002 on market access. The preparation of technical material and notes for this purpose would require two work-months of temporary staff assistance at the P-5 level, estimated at $16,000. In addition, there would be a need for travel of four resource persons and two UNCTAD staff members to the seminar, estimated at $14,700, and for related miscellaneous expenses of $7,000. Total additional resources are therefore estimated at $37,700.

Sections 16-20, Regional commissions ($50,000)

8. In response to the provision of the draft resolution, the five regional commissions plan to jointly hold an interregional meeting of eminent experts in January 2002. The meeting will be held for three days at the ECLAC subregional office in Mexico City. Each regional commission is expected to select five eminent persons from its region from a cross-section of stakeholders, including experts from Governments, research institutions and the private sector, in their personal capacities, with a view to developing ideas for concrete initiatives from regional and

subregional perspectives within the framework and in support of the substantive agenda of the Conference. In addition to the 25 experts, the participants at the meeting will include the 5 executive secretaries of the regional commissions together with 2 senior staff who are directly responsible for work relevant to the financing for development process for each regional commission. The regional development banks and other relevant regional and subregional financial institutions will be invited to participate at their own expense. It is estimated that requirements for travel of the 25 eminent persons would be met by the trust fund established to support the Conference and its Preparatory Committee. An estimated amount of $50,000 (or $10,000 for each one) would be required to assist the regional commissions to prepare and attend the interregional meeting of experts as well as to attend the Conference itself in March 2002.

Section 26, Public information ($107,400)

9. The activities to be undertaken by the Department of Public Information would include the launching of a global public awareness campaign with support from public and private partners. Consistent with established practice with regard to United Nations special conferences, public information activities would be undertaken by the Department to publicize the Conference and the issues to be addressed. In this connection, general temporary assistance requirements of $46,400, equivalent to four work-months each at the P-4 and the General Service (Other level) levels, would be required in 2002 to continue activities initiated in the biennium 2000-2001 for the coordination and implementation of the public information programme, including the preparation of public information products, such as press kits, background articles, fact sheets and brochures; the development of other materials and the promotion of the Conference; the development of partnerships with relevant civil society actors; and proactive media outreach activities to interest journalists in the issues related to the Conference and to encourage the international news media to cover the Conference. Other requirements would provide for: (a) contractual arrangements for the conversion of public information material to hypertext mark-up language (HTML) for web sites in Arabic, Chinese and Russian ($6,000); (b) public information production costs for the translation of information material into local languages and events organized at the national level by United Nations information centres ($30,000); (c) the follow-up of the outcome of the Conference ($15,000); and (d) the production of banners and exhibits for the Conference site ($10,000), for a total of $55,000.

Section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services

10. The conference-servicing requirements in 2002 would include the holding of the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for one week in January 2002, with two meetings per day for five days. Interpretation and translation services would be provided in the six official languages of the General Assembly. The estimates at full cost would amount to $858,700.

11. The above estimate is based on the theoretical assumption that no part of the conference-servicing requirements would be met from within the permanent conference-servicing capacity included under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. As indicated to the Preparatory Committee, the fourth substantive session of the Committee and the Conference itself would be included in the calendar of

conferences and meetings for the biennium 2002-2003, and the related provision would be included under section 2 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. As a result, no additional resources would be required under that section. It should be noted that since the Conference will be held at a location away from Headquarters, any additional costs incurred in convening the Conference at that location would be borne by the host Government, in accordance with established procedures.

III. Action required by the General Assembly

12. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution** A/55/L.82, **it is proposed that the additional requirements of $295,100 related to activities to be carried out in 2002, in the context of the last months of the preparatory process of the International Conference on Financing for Development, be charged against the provision for the contingency fund, to be adopted by the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.**